



American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan Report to the Annual General Meeting of Apiculture New Zealand (Inc)

**30 June 2023
(Friday)**

**Report prepared by:
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American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan AFB PMP

Summary

During 2022/23 the Management Agency completed consultation with beekeepers on the future of the pest management plan and continued to increase the AFB elimination services provided to beekeepers.

From June 2021 to September 2022 the Management Agency conducted three national consultation rounds on the future of the pest management plan, conducted 17 regional meetings attended by 328 people, conducted 11 webinars attended by 145 people, and received and considered a total of 1,065 submissions.

We would like to thank every-one that participated in the consultation process. The National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan is the beekeeping industry's plan for eliminating AFB, and it's vital that beekeepers engage and have their say on the future of AFB elimination. Your feedback identified opportunities to improve the plan and most submitters supported the proposed amendments to ensure that:

- All beehive locations are notified as apiaries
- All beehives are inspected at least once per year by a competent person
- All honeybees, bee products and appliances associated with AFB are destroyed
- Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement (DECA) holders eliminate AFB from their beehives, and
- The Management Agency has access to the information and powers required to monitor and enforce the plan.

The Management Agency submitted the proposal to amend and extend the Biosecurity (National American Foulbrood Pest Management) Plan Order 1998 to the Minister for Biosecurity in March 2023. The Minister and his officials are now considering the proposal and we expect that the new plan order will be adopted in 2024.

This year the Management Agency has also made it more convenient for beekeepers to learn how to recognise AFB by developing and deploying new online AFB Recognition and Refresher courses. We also revised and improved our in-person instructor led courses. Both the online and instructor led courses have excellent new high-definition photos and instructional videos to assist beekeeper's learning.

We are also pleased to report that we have achieved a 24.4% increase in the number of apiaries inspected from 3,024 in 2021/22 to 3,793 in 2022/23. The 24.4% increase in AP2 inspections resulted in a 30.4% increase in the number of AFB cases identified by AP2s (from 586 to 764). In contrast, the number of cases of AFB identified by beekeepers has fallen 7.6% from 2,916 to 2,694.

Reported Incidence of American Foulbrood, June 2022 to May 2023

The overall number of reported cases has declined to 3,458 down from 3,546 the previous year. However, when the incidence of AFB is measured as a percentage of colonies the annual incidence has risen from 0.46% to 0.56%. This is directly due to the rapid decline in the number of colonies - down to 608,607 from 736,707 the previous year.

Beekeeper, Apiary and Colony Numbers

Beekeeper apiary and colony numbers have declined since 1 June 2022. As of 1 June 2023, there were 9,533 registered beekeepers (down from 10,170 on 1 June 2022), 57,139 apiaries (down from 61,752 apiaries on 1 June 2022) and 608,607 colonies (down from 736,707 on 1 June 2022).

Annual Disease Return (ADR) and Certificate of Inspection (COI) Defaulters

At 1 June 2023, 7,267 (76%) of beekeepers had submitted an ADR, up from 6,969 (70%) received at the same time the previous year.

Those beekeepers who had not submitted their ADRs on time were sent reminders before being sent a warning advising that continued failure to submit an ADR is a breach of their Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement, and

that their Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement would be cancelled if the ADR is not submitted before the deadline. Beekeepers without a DECA that fail to submit an ADR by 1 June are no longer eligible to apply for a DECA.

By 15 December 2023, 2,644 Certificates of Inspection had been completed and submitted to the Management Agency. This is similar to the previous year when 2,604 Certificates of Inspection were completed and submitted. The Management Agency then scheduled default inspections for beekeepers with greater than 3 apiaries or greater than 10 colonies that defaulted on their 2022 Certificate of Inspection.

Disease Elimination Conformity Agreements (DECA)

53% of all beekeepers currently hold a Disease Elimination Conformity Agreement. These beekeepers own 95% of colonies.

AFB Recognition Course Training

The Management Agency launched online AFB Recognition Training in November 2023, and online AFB Refresher Training in December 2022. The intention is to make it more convenient for beekeepers to learn how to recognise AFB. 112 beekeepers have completed online AFB Recognition Training, and a further 160 completed online AFB Refresher Training.

A total of 1,045 beekeepers completed AFB training in 2022/23. 679 completed the AFB Recognition course (down 12% on the previous year) and a further 366 completed an AFB Refresher course (up 61% on the previous year).

AFB Authorised Person Inspection Activity

3,793 apiaries were inspected in 2022/23 up from 3,024 in 2022/23. AP2 inspections identified that 2.8% of hives and 8.5% of apiaries had AFB.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank the Management Agency team of Marco Gonzalez, Dwayne Hill, Janette Gwilliam, Tracey Gonzalez, Leonie Elliot-Mason, and Julia Bell for their continued efforts supporting beekeepers to eliminate AFB. A summary of the volume of work completed by the team in 2022/23 is:

- 7,541 phone calls made and received
- 10,296 beekeeper support cases closed
- 1,591 new beekeeper registrations
- 1,145 beekeeper deregistrations
- 7,493 new apiary registrations reviewed
- 11,337 apiary deregistrations reviewed
- 1,045 beekeepers trained
- 472 DECA's approved
- 2,044 AFB notifications reviewed, and
- 3,793 apiaries inspected

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